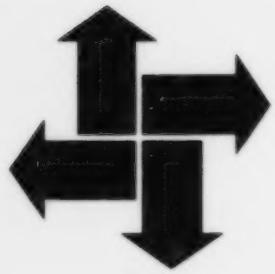
TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

1 April 2000 -
31 March 2001

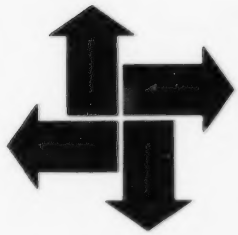


ALBERTA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFER

106-02190/

TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

1 April 2000 -
31 March 2001



ALBERTA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFER

909, 9942 - 108 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J5

Phone: (780) 422-9021
Fax: (780) 427-0423
E-mail: acat@gov.ab.ca
Web Address: http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca

ISSN 0383 - 5057

Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer

Fax number: (780) 427-0423 Phone Number: (780) 422-9021

1 June 2001

The Honourable Lyle Oberg
Minister of Learning
227 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Dr. Oberg:

On behalf of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer and in accordance with Council's terms of reference, I have the honour of providing you with the Twenty-sixth Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2001.

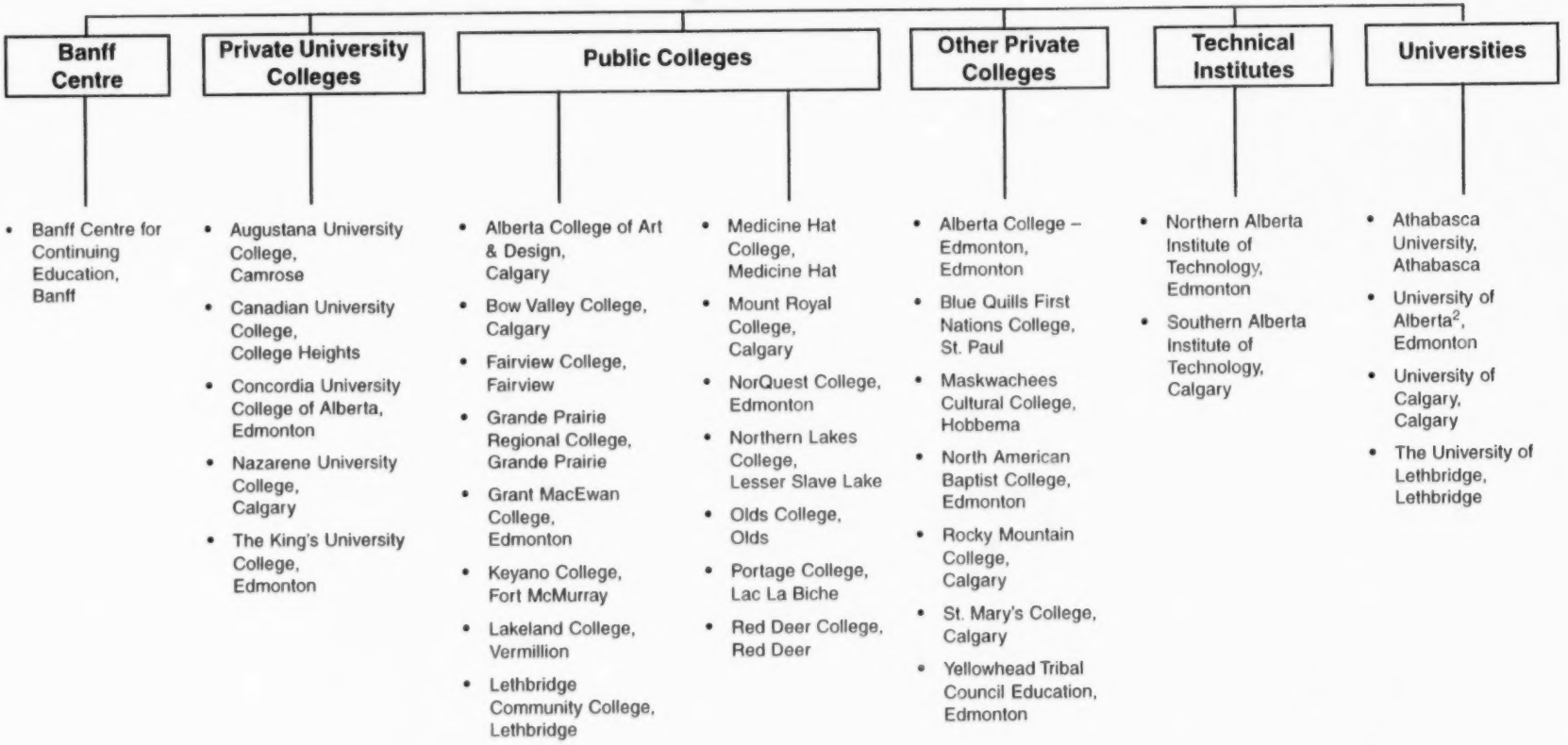
Sincerely,

Terry Moore

Terry Moore
Chair

TM:kjs

ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY TRANSFER SYSTEM[1]


Banff Centre
Banff Centre for Continuing Education, Banff
Private University Colleges
Augustana University College, Camrose
Canadian University College, College Heights
Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton
Nazarene University College, Calgary
The King's University College, Edmonton
Public Colleges
Alberta College of Art & Design, Calgary
Bow Valley College, Calgary
Fairview College, Fairview
Grande Prairie Regional College, Grande Prairie
Grant MacEwan College, Edmonton
Keyano College, Fort McMurray
Lakeland College, Vermillion
Lethbridge Community College, Lethbridge
Medicine Hat College, Medicine Hat
Mount Royal College, Calgary
NorQuest College, Edmonton
Northern Lakes College, Lesser Slave Lake
Olds College, Olds
Portage College, Lac La Biche
Red Deer College, Red Deer
Other Private Colleges
Alberta College – Edmonton, Edmonton
Blue Quills First Nations College, St. Paul
Maskwachees Cultural College, Hobbema
North American Baptist College, Edmonton
Rocky Mountain College, Calgary
St. Mary's College, Calgary
Yellowhead Tribal Council Education, Edmonton
Technical Institutes
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Edmonton
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Calgary
Universities
Athabasca University, Athabasca
University of Alberta[2], Edmonton
University of Calgary, Calgary
The University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge

[1] This chart contains public institutions and those with transfer agreements in Section III of the *Transfer Guide*. In addition, the *Guide* includes transfer agreements with Aurora College and Nunavut Arctic College in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, Edmonton School of Ballet, Nechi Institute on Alcohol and Drug Education, and Transport Canada. There are other organizations, private and non-affiliated colleges and private vocational schools in Alberta, some of which may offer courses that are transferable.

[2] University of Alberta has a formal affiliation agreement with North American Baptist College, Edmonton under which certain courses offered by the College will be accepted by the University for transfer credit. St. Joseph's College and St. Stephen's College are affiliated with the University of Alberta and are located on the University's campus.

Source: *2000-2001 Alberta Transfer Guide*

INTRODUCTION

Student transfer involves the portability of educational credit among post-secondary institutions. Based on successful completion of studies at an Alberta post-secondary institution, students receive transfer credit, where appropriate, upon admission to an educational program in another Alberta post-secondary institution. The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) serves as a body through which Alberta's post-secondary institutions work in a co-operative manner to ensure effective transferability. Basic to the work of Council is the principle that a student should not be required to repeat previous learning experiences in which competence has been demonstrated, nor be granted more transfer credit than previous learning experiences would warrant for successful completion of the program.

Established in 1974 at the request of post-secondary institutions, Council operates with the support of the Minister of Learning and the co-operation of Alberta's post-secondary institutions. The 14-member Council includes the Chair and representatives from the public, students, universities, public colleges and technical institutes, private university colleges, and a secondary system member from Alberta Learning. Council reports annually to the Minister of Learning. The services of the Executive Officer, Research Officer and Secretary are provided by Alberta Learning in the fulfillment of Council's responsibilities. Council membership is recorded in Addendum A, its Terms of Reference in Addendum B, its Principles, Policies and Procedures in Addendum C, the Alberta Transfer Model in Addendum D, and a list of current publications in Addendum E.

Post-secondary institutions have statutory responsibility for admission and transfer decisions. Those that are part of the Alberta transfer system are committed to Council's Principles, Policies, and Procedures while retaining full responsibility to develop and implement their admission and transfer policies. As part of its leadership role, Council encourages them to co-operate for the benefit of students. While actively involved with transfer credit issues, Council is also interested in admission policies from a system-wide perspective. These policies not only affect the ability of students to transfer credit, but provide the key linkage between the secondary and post-secondary systems.

Council's Principles, Policies and Procedures act as a framework to facilitate transfer agreements among institutions. Council encourages the maintenance of sound transfer agreements in a changing environment. Where appropriate, it encourages negotiations for programs and courses not presently covered by transfer agreements. These negotiated transfer agreements, together with institutional admission policies respecting transfer students, are compiled and published by Council in its annual *Alberta Transfer Guide* and made available on the Internet through the Online Alberta Transfer Guide.

To facilitate communication with and between institutions, Council has established a network of institutional representatives called "Contact Persons". Presently this network of Contact Persons includes a representative from each of 36 post-secondary institutions. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Council Office is actively engaged in the day-to-day work of ensuring that institutional admission policies and transfer agreements are in accordance with Council's Principles, Policies, and Procedures. Where difficulties arise, it provides consultation and mediation to ameliorate or resolve concerns. In addition, by identifying potential transfer agreements, Council serves as a catalyst to bring about improvement.

COUNCIL'S MANDATE, MISSION, VISION AND GOALS

Mandate

The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) serves as a body through which stakeholders work co-operatively to ensure effective transferability of courses or programs for students.

ACAT provides leadership to Alberta's post-secondary transfer system to achieve:

- increased educational opportunities for adult learners through student transfer; and
- accurate information for learners about admission and transfer opportunities.

ACAT operates with the support of the Minister of Learning and the co-operation of Alberta's post-secondary institutions. Student transfer involves the portability of educational credit among programs. Based on successful completion of studies, students receive transfer credit, where appropriate, upon admission to an educational program in an Alberta post-secondary institution.

Mission

The mission of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer is to be a catalyst for change and an advocate for learners in the areas of admission and transfer to educational programs.

ACAT provides leadership and direction in the improvement and enlargement of educational opportunities for Alberta learners through inter-institutional transfer. This requires a commitment to improving communication among and between Alberta's post-secondary institutions, as well as stakeholders in the trades and secondary system, and to promoting the advantages of a system of education, with all that means for educational planning for the benefit of learners.

To carry out its mission, ACAT:

- identifies issues and explores resolutions to these issues with stakeholders,
- advocates for learners at both a general level through its Principles and a specific level through interaction of ACAT's staff with learners, and
- communicates with stakeholders and encourages communication among stakeholders on matters regarding admissions and transfer.

Vision

ACAT is a leader in ensuring that learners have access to a highly effective and efficient transfer system. ACAT inspires partner institutions to guarantee that prior learning of prospective students is appropriately recognized upon admission.

All individuals and groups who provide or benefit from opportunities to learn, share responsibility for realizing the vision for student transfer in Alberta.

ACAT is guided by its Principles and pre-eminently by principle (a), which states that student access to higher education and the opportunity for student mobility among post-secondary institutions in Alberta shall be optimized. Barriers to student mobility shall be minimized. The integrity of educational programs and certification must, however, be maintained. A student should not be required to repeat previous learning experiences in which competence has been demonstrated nor should more transfer credit be granted than previous learning experiences would warrant for successful completion of the program.

Goals

ACAT has three goals that are necessary to realize its mandate:

Admission
Students will be admitted to programs on the basis of the relevance and quality of their total educational experiences.

Transfer
Students will receive appropriate educational credit when they transfer from one Alberta program to another.

Communication
Students will have access to current, accurate information on admission and transfer policies as well as course and program transfer opportunities.

ALBERTA TRANSFER GUIDE – 25th Anniversary Edition

In May 2000, the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer proudly celebrated publication of the 25th annual edition of the *Alberta Transfer Guide*. On this anniversary, ACAT acknowledged the tremendous commitment the post-secondary institutions in Alberta have made on behalf of students. The first *Transfer Guide*, published for the 1976-77 academic year, was the first provincial transfer guide in Canada. The first edition of the Guide reported 1,775 course and program agreements involving 12 post-secondary institutions. In contrast, the 25th edition for the 2000-2001 academic year involved over 25,400 transfer agreements and 36 institutions in Alberta, Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

The *Alberta Transfer Guide* is a reflection of the extent to which Alberta's post-secondary institutions are co-operating to reduce and eliminate obstacles to transferability. Its publication and distribution each spring is a major responsibility of Council. Preparation of each edition of the *Alberta Transfer Guide* is a dynamic process as new transfer agreements are continually being negotiated and current agreements are reviewed, revised or deleted. Marilyn Patton, Executive Officer, once again managed production of the *Alberta Transfer Guide* with the assistance of the institutional Contact Persons. The twenty-fifth annual edition for the 2000-01 academic year was distributed extensively within Alberta to the registrar's office of all post-secondary institutions, student associations, high school principals and guidance counsellors, Alberta Career Development Centres, and public libraries. It was also distributed to jurisdictions outside the province to provide recognition on transfer for courses taken by students in Alberta, and to students and others on request.

Twelve institutions requested and received camera-ready copy of their entries in the *Transfer Guide* along with other relevant sections to reprint and distribute widely to students. These colleges were commended for working with Council to provide students with relevant transfer information.

All institutional Contact Persons were invited to submit information on new or revised transfer agreements for the 2001-02 edition of the *Transfer Guide*. Following Council's procedure for the review of transfer agreements, Contact Persons advised Council to delete obsolete entries and to revise amended transfer agreements so that the information in the *2001-02 Alberta Transfer Guide* will reflect courses and programs offered during the 2001-02 academic year.

Re-development of the Transfer Agreement database and Web sites

Early in the reporting period, resources were approved for Council's proposal to redesign both Web sites along with redevelopment of the transfer agreement database. The project was intended to provide improved functionality for users of these Web sites. By late spring, work on the project commenced with selection of the contractor, Pangaea Systems Inc.

The current system, which was originally designed in 1995, needed to be re-developed. A more user-friendly public Web search was needed, the database required a feature to provide historical versioning of courses and programs, and the formatting of the printed *Transfer Guide* needed to be changed to accommodate the increased number of receiving institutions.

As specifications were being refined, ACAT convened a focus session with students regarding the design of the new public Web site. A workshop was convened with institutional Contact Persons to gain feedback on draft designs of the Contact Persons' Web site. Throughout the project, the Executive Officer, Marilyn Patton, worked closely with the contractor to ensure that the project would meet the requirements identified by ACAT. By the end of March 2001, the project was well advanced and full implementation was expected by early summer 2001.

Online Alberta Transfer Guide

The public can access information on transfer agreements through the Internet via the Online Alberta Transfer Guide. Using pre-programmed queries, students and advisors can find out which courses are transferable and to which institutions. Information on transfer agreements effective from 1993-94 to the present is available. Also on the site are admissions and transfer information for each post-secondary institution, including hyperlinks to their Web sites and online help. A number of links to other related sites, including the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) add further value to this Web site.

New information has been posted on the site and the charts currently featured at the front of the *Transfer Guide* are posted in portable document format (PDF). This format allows users to read the charts using Acrobat Reader software for which there is no charge when downloaded from Adobe's Web site. During the reporting period, the site had a monthly average of 14,882 visitors.

Contact Persons' Web site

Since 1976 Council has maintained a network of institutional representatives to facilitate communication with Council and among institutions. The work of these Contact Persons is invaluable in relation to the production of the *Transfer Guide* and the collection of transfer patterns data, as well as in the day-to-day implementation of transfer agreements. The role and responsibilities of the Contact Persons are outlined in the *Handbook for Contact Persons*, which was revised during the year.

The Contact Persons' Web site is a password protected site where Contact Persons are able to initiate, review and authorize Transfer Credit Proposals and attach electronic supporting documents, typically course outlines. Once Transfer Credit Proposal Forms are completed and authorized, the information is moved into Council's transfer agreement database which supports production of the *Alberta Transfer Guide* as well as the Online Alberta Transfer Guide. The system helps Contact Persons to manage their transfer credit proposals as well as active transfer agreements. In addition, the site serves as an important communication tool for Contact Persons and the Council Office. The new Notice Board feature has been especially helpful. The site was used, on average, 7,299 times per month.

Re-development of the Contact Persons' Web site was a key topic of discussion at the annual meeting of the Committee of Contact Persons with the Chair and Executive Officer. The meeting was hosted by the University of Calgary on 18 October 2000. Delegates from 33 post-secondary institutions participated in the meeting. As well, 18 helpers of Contact Persons also attended.

ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFER DEVELOPMENTS

Minister's Working Group on Admissions and Transfer

After an earlier meeting with the Universities Co-ordinating Council (UCC), on 30 June 1999, the Minister of Learning, announced a review of Alberta's post-secondary admission and transfer policies to ensure that learners have the best possible access to post-secondary educational opportunities. In his announcement, Dr. Oberg asked the UCC to build a working group composed of major stakeholders to undertake this review. He also asked ACAT to work with the UCC group.

The Working Group, headed by Dr. Dominique Abrioux, President of Athabasca University and then Chair of UCC, was asked to review current admissions and transfer policies including, but not limited to:

- acceptance of high school courses for admittance to post-secondary institutions;
- transferability issues – university to university and other post-secondary institutions to and from university;
- consistency in grade conversion among post-secondary institutions; and
- exploration of the feasibility of a common application form.

The Working Group met on 29 October 1999 and endorsed the composition of the Working Group as well as its scope and plan of action for achieving results. Members agreed to conduct the review by means of four sub-committees: Admissions, Application Forms, Grade Conversion, and Transferability. Each sub-committee was chaired by a university member of the Working Group and drew its membership from major stakeholders.

The Chair and Executive Officer of Council served as resource persons to the Working Group and its four sub-committees. These sub-committees worked actively and, with the exception of Admissions, the sub-committees completed their assigned tasks by late January 2000 and the Working Group approved an interim report in February 2000. This interim report was shared with ACAT, the Deputy Minister and, in April 2000, with the Council of Presidents, Public Colleges and Technical Institutes.

The Admissions sub-committee had four full-group meetings between October 1999 and May 2000 to explore and discuss the complex issues that formed the focus of this sub-committee. The involvement of students, both from the secondary and post-secondary levels, was most helpful in articulating the impact on learners of the various admission and curricular matters before the sub-committee.

The Admissions sub-committee delayed completion of its work until Alberta Learning had provided the universities with the revised Applied Mathematics 30 curriculum and standards in March 2000. The universities then reviewed the curriculum and standards. In response to a need for further clarification, a meeting, chaired by Dr. Terry Moore (ACAT), was held on 1 May 2000 of 18 representatives from the university sector to focus specifically on the curriculum of Applied Mathematics 30 and the use of this course for admission to university programs. Many of the representatives from this group, which submitted a report to the Admissions sub-committee, also participated in the fourth and final meeting of the Admissions sub-committee on 10 May 2000.

In reviewing the suitability of Applied Mathematics 30 for admission to specific programs, post-secondary institutions were primarily interested in ensuring that students are well prepared for success. To do otherwise would put students at risk of failure. Following careful review of the new High School mathematics curriculum by a number of

post-secondary institutions, the Admissions sub-committee completed its tasks on 10 May.

At its 16 May meeting, the Working Group received the final report of the Admissions sub-committee and approved actions recommended in its report. The detailed review of the Applied Mathematics 30 curriculum did not lead to the universities changing their decisions about its applicability for admission to certain programs because core competencies in Applied Mathematics 30 did not match those required to predict success in most university programs. The Working Group, therefore, directed its Chair to write to the Deputy Minister with the recommendation that certain actions be taken immediately. The recommendations were intended both to curtail the misinformation that was circulating and to introduce remedies such that students who have chosen, based on misinformation, to take the Applied Mathematics curriculum not be unduly penalized. In a letter dated 19 June, the Deputy Minister responded and outlined actions that Alberta Learning had taken.

In November 2000, the Working Group submitted its final report and appendices to the Minister of Learning. Whereas the appendices contained each sub-committee's detailed report, and as such were integral to an understanding of the over-all report, the report summarized the issues that each sub-committee focused on and highlighted the specific outcomes and thirty recommendations endorsed by the Working Group. In his letter of transmittal to the Minister, Dr. Abrioux noted:

> "Learner-centred systems inevitably lead to greater, not reduced, program differentiation and in this context exemplary communication is pivotal to ensuring that all players work together.
>
> I would also like to bring to your attention the Group's high regard for the stellar work and leadership provided by the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT). All stakeholder members of the committee expressed confidence in the pivotal role that ACAT plays and would like (as several of our recommendations stress) to see its importance enhanced."

In response, on 4 December 2000, the Minister wrote to the Chair. He acknowledged receipt of the report and expressed his appreciation to those who helped make the report possible. The Minister indicated that he would respond fully to the report once he had an opportunity to examine the recommendations. Although initiatives were commenced involving ACAT, for example, work to improve high school transitions and the use of mathematics courses for admission to post-secondary programs, by the end of the reporting period, the Minister had not yet responded to the report.

Common Grading System

Alberta's four universities currently employ three different grading systems. Athabasca University uses a percentage system while the University of Alberta uses a 9-point system. The 4-point alpha grading systems of the Universities of Calgary and Lethbridge are broadly similar although there are some differences; for example, the use of the A+ designation in the Lethbridge system. Three private university colleges have grading systems that are similar to that of the University of Alberta.

In January 2000, the Working Group's Grade Conversion sub-committee suggested that the Universities Co-ordinating Council (UCC) consider striking a committee to explore the feasibility of all four universities in Alberta adopting a similar grading system. Dissimilar grading systems were perceived to be problematic for student mobility as they necessitate conversion scales and may be poorly understood in other jurisdictions. Consequently, the UCC took action at its January 2000 meeting by endorsing the suggestion and forming the Common Grading System Committee. Council's Chair accepted the invitation to chair this Committee. The Committee was charged with outlining a grading system that is academically sound, attuned to the needs of students, and readily recognized by other universities, professional licensure bodies, employers and the public. The Common Grading System committee met four times from April 2000 to February 2001.

Discussion

At its first meeting, convened 14 April 2000, the committee unanimously agreed to recommend that universities consider the merits of adopting a version of a 4-point alpha grading system. At subsequent meetings during autumn and winter, the merits of two variants of a 4-point alpha scale were discussed. At the February 2001 meeting, all delegates strongly agreed that having the same grading system in the universities and private university colleges would be an advantage for Alberta students. And all agreed that either variant would provide a good grading system which would be feasible to implement at each of the institutions.

Members of the committee weighed these factors differently, with some preferring the 4.3 scale and some the 4.0 scale. Whatever their individual preferences, the members of the committee were not in a position to make the final decision on a grading system, since that decision rests with the academic decision-making body at each university and private university college. On that basis, the committee devised a process likely to ensure that one version would be considered for adoption by all the participating institutions.

Recommendation: Grading System and Process

To start the agreed process, on 19 March 2001, the General Faculties Council of the University of Alberta received the common grading system recommendation and adopted the A+ 4.0 grading scale for implementation in September 2003. Both A+ and A are weighted as 4.0 and the grade of D (1.0) is determined to be a minimal pass. Through the process that the Common Grading System Committee adopted at its February 2001 meeting, this 4.0 grading scale will be brought forward for consideration at other Alberta universities and private university colleges. This grading scale is illustrated in the following table.

Common Grading Scale

4.0 Grading Scale			
Descriptor	**Alpha Grade**	**4.0-Point Scale**	**Number of Intervals**
	A+	4.0	12
Excellent	A	4.0	11
	A-	3.7	10
	B+	3.3	9
Good	B	3.0	8
	B-	2.7	7
	C+	2.3	6
Satisfactory	C	2.0	5
	C-	1.7	4
Poor	D+	1.3	3
Minimal Pass	D	1.0	2
Failure	F [or F(S)]*	0.0	1

*NOTE: F(S) denotes eligibility of a student to apply for a supplemental examination in a course and is applicable only at post-secondary institutions where policies permit its use.

By the end of the reporting period, the same 4.0 scale that had been approved at the University of Alberta on 19 March 2001 was scheduled for consideration at the other three universities and five private university colleges during spring 2001.

Student Organizations

During the reporting period, communication links were maintained with student organizations through student members, Erin Ludwig of the Alberta College and Technical Institute Student Executives (ACTISEC) and Naomi Agard of the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS). In order to share information on ACAT's initiatives and to be briefed on student views, Council's Chair met with members of

ACTISEC in July 2000 and with members of CAUS in June 2000. The University of Alberta Students' Union graciously hosted the September 2001 meeting of Council. In October 2001, at the Canadian Academic Round Table sponsored by the University of Alberta Students' Union, Council's Chair facilitated a discussion of transitions that students make from high school to post-secondary education. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for the Chair to meet students from colleges and universities across Canada and to learn about their views and concerns.

Secondary – Post-Secondary Transitions

In its report, the Working Group made general recommendations regarding the use of high school courses for admission to university programs as well as particular ones regarding mathematics. The use of Applied Mathematics 30 for admission to university programs was the major focus of the Working Group's Admissions sub-committee. The Working Group had strongly recommended that ACAT increasingly work on the admissions side of its mandate to ensure that students are able to make smooth transitions from high school to post-secondary programs. ACAT agreed to apply to admission the kinds of processes and strategies that it has successfully developed with respect to transfer of courses and programs at the post-secondary level.

Mathematics

The ongoing implementation of the new high school mathematics curriculum involving Pure Mathematics 10-20-30 and Applied Mathematics 10-20-30 posed post-secondary admission issues. Pure Mathematics was seen to provide a strong algebra background and good preparation for students entering university-level mathematics and science courses. However, because core competencies in Applied Mathematics 30 did not match those required for success in a range of post-secondary courses and programs, the course was not acceptable for admission to a number of post-secondary programs. The concern was for students who, lacking adequate preparation, would be prone to failure in subsequent studies.

To help ensure that issues related to the acceptance of Applied Mathematics 30 for admission are addressed, at its June 2000 meeting, Council formed the Secondary – Post-Secondary Mathematics Articulation Committee. On 27 July, a meeting of this committee, chaired by Terry Moore, was convened at NAIT to focus on the use of 30-level mathematics courses for admission to post-secondary programs. A transition course had been proposed which would enable students who had successfully completed Applied Mathematics 30 to be admitted to some post-secondary programs. There were three goals for the meeting: (1) to clarify the purposes of a potential transition course which would enable students who had

successfully completed Applied Mathematics 30 to be admitted to some post-secondary programs, (2) to identify topics for a potential transition course and (3) to suggest minor revisions to the Applied Mathematics curriculum.

After a wide-ranging discussion and frank exchange of views, the meeting concluded with the following outcomes. First, the Basic Learning Division undertook to define appropriate pathways within the secondary system for high school students who wished to move from one mathematics course stream to the other. Second, Council was asked to create a small committee composed of mathematics specialists drawn from post-secondary institutions as well as Basic Learning's Curriculum branch. This committee, which came to be known as the Transitional Mathematics Committee, was to identify gaps in the Applied Mathematics 30 curriculum and help specify learning outcomes for a transition course.

Transitional Mathematics

The Transitional Mathematics Committee, chaired by Katie Pallos-Haden, Mathematics Program Manager, Curriculum branch, met four times during the reporting period. Its membership included Council's Chair, mathematicians from the four universities as well as colleges and technical institutes and specialists from the Curriculum branch. The Committee determined that the transition course should prepare students for admission to post-secondary programs or serve as a course prerequisite in lieu of Pure Mathematics 30. The Committee identified gaps in the Applied Mathematics 30 curriculum and outlined topics that needed to be included in the curriculum for the transition course.

During the winter and early spring, the Transitional Mathematics Committee worked with Athabasca University's design team in the development of a new course, provisionally titled Mathematics 101. The purpose of the initiative is to enable students who have successfully completed Applied Mathematics 30 to take Athabasca University's Mathematics 101 and, if successful, use the course for admission to post-secondary programs in lieu of Pure Mathematics 30. This course is expected to be available to students through various means of delivery. Mathematics 101 was being designed to meet potential needs of those among the approximately 3,000 students who would by June 2001 have completed Applied Mathematics 30 and who might then want to pursue post-secondary studies that required Pure Mathematics 30.

By the end of the reporting period, curriculum gaps in Applied Mathematics 30 had been identified, learning outcomes had been specified, and a first draft of the transitional course, provisionally called Mathematics 101, had been prepared by Athabasca University for review by the Committee. The goal was to have the course ready for implementation by June 2001.

Post-Secondary Program Articulation

In 1991 Council adopted a policy of facilitating program transfer issues meetings. Where warranted, Council would bring together the co-ordinators of particular programs to identify transfer issues that relate to differences in course content as well as program requirements and admission issues, and to explore appropriate potential solutions. This is consistent with Council's role to foster better communication among institutions and thus to improve understanding and co-operation on all matters related to transfer.

Statistics

The Working Group recommended that Council apply its program articulation process to help resolve issues involving transferability of first-year statistics courses. Following discussion at Council, the Chair convened a Statistics Articulation meeting at the University of Calgary on 5 May 2000. The main purpose of the meeting was the articulation of first-year statistics courses. A separate issue involved courses which may be offered within different disciplines; for example, psychology or sociology, that contain components of statistics as used in that particular discipline. The primary goal of the meeting was to improve the articulation of first-year statistics courses among Alberta colleges and universities in order to facilitate transferability for the benefit of students.

With attention focused on articulation issues involving first-year Statistics courses, current course transfer agreements were individually reviewed. Where courses did not transfer in lieu of a specific receiving institution course, current course outlines enabled a fresh review. By the end of the reporting period, progress had been achieved. There was a decrease by one in the number of first-year statistics courses that Medicine Hat College needed to offer in order to meet student demand for transfer into university programs. Where there is a program requirement for one 3-credit statistics course at the first year level, the universities undertook to ensure appropriate articulation.

Ongoing Program Articulation Initiatives

During the year, program articulation activity continued in four areas: academic upgrading, biological sciences, education and engineering. The Executive Officer met with the Provincial Academic Upgrading Co-ordinators committee on 12 May and 29 September 2000 and 2 February 2001. Although a Biological Sciences Program Articulation meeting was not warranted during this reporting period, Council's Chair maintained e-mail communication with biological science delegates. Council was involved in a joint meeting with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education College Liaison Committee on 27 October 2000. The morning was devoted to the University's college liaison issues and the afternoon's provincial program articulation session was chaired by Council's Chair. An Engineering program

articulation meeting was held on 11 December 2000 at which draft articulation charts were reviewed. Student advising charts were published for academic upgrading, biological sciences and engineering programs in the *Transfer Guide* and posted on the Online Alberta Transfer Guide. At the end of the reporting period, these charts had been revised for the next academic year.

High School Transitions

Students leaving high school may move from the youth learning system to the adult learning system or employment. Alberta Learning's "School Career Transitions" initiative is intended to improve transitions, in part through improving structured pathways into the work place and post-secondary education programs. Council's Chair continued to serve on the School Career Transitions Coordinating Committee.

Council continued its collaboration with Alberta Learning to study transitions that grade 12 students make into the adult learning system. A report titled "Post-Secondary Transitions in Alberta: Educational Outcomes of the 1997/98 Grade 12 Cohort" was prepared and distributed in July 2000. The report also included a follow-up study of the 1996/97 cohort to estimate the number of students who delayed entry to post-secondary study until September 1998. Late in the reporting period, work was well underway to produce a similar study of educational outcomes of 1998/1999 grade 12 students.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

As learning may occur in a variety of settings, Council recognizes that it is essential that adult learners receive appropriate recognition for prior demonstrated learning toward desired certificate, diploma or degree programs. In March 2001, Council produced and distributed an updated inventory of institutional PLAR policies under the title, "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition: Policies and Procedures at Selected Post-Secondary Institutions". This document contained policies from fifteen post-secondary institutions whereas the compendium produced in June 1998 recorded policies at eleven institutions. Council's Principles and Standards for the Recognition of Prior Learning are recorded in section G of Addendum C.

Transfer Infoline

Adult learners who are planning to start or return to post-secondary study and have questions about transfer can contact Council's Transfer Infoline for service. Students may access the service by e-mail through the Online Alberta Transfer Guide or by mail, fax, or toll-

free telephone. Posters publicizing the service were distributed along with the *Alberta Transfer Guide* to high school counsellors, student associations, and post-secondary institutions. The brochure, "University Transfer: Advice for University Transfer Program Students", revised during the year, provides answers to frequently asked questions about transfer. The brochure can be downloaded from Online Alberta Transfer Guide Web site at www.acat.gov.ab.ca/taars/nocategory_scripts/brochure.pdf.

Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS)

The Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) is an Internet gateway to career, learning and employment information in Alberta. The Learning section of ALIS includes a link to the Online Alberta Transfer Guide. Council helped build awareness of ALIS by maintaining a reciprocal link from the Online Transfer Guide to ALIS and by including a notice on the inside cover of the *Transfer Guide*. ALIS, which is located at www.alis.gov.ab.ca, is made possible through financial and administrative support provided by the government of Alberta. Council's Chair is a member of the ALIS Advisory Committee.

Private Providers Policy

Recognizing that adult learners are served by a variety of providers, Council has a responsibility to students to facilitate course transfer agreements between private providers and post-secondary receiving institutions. Council's policy and procedures for facilitating course transfer agreements between Alberta non-degree granting private providers and post-secondary receiving institutions are recorded in section F of Addendum C.

Institutions that request service under this policy work with the Council Office to produce a fact sheet. The fact sheet presents, in standard format, information about private institutions that public institutions can request. During the reporting period, one institution requested initial service from the Council Office through this policy and two institutions completed fact sheets. As well, an institutional fact sheet was revised.

Duplicate Application Detection Project

The Duplicate Application Detection (DAD) project originated in 1992 and is co-ordinated by Council in conjunction with participating post-secondary institutions. The project has enabled the Council Office to compare selected elements of new student application files from pairs of institutions to determine the extent of duplicate applications between institutions. The process is designed so that the identity of

individual students is fully protected. In Fall 2000, there were 29 institutions that participated in the project. The study was conducted, results were produced and returned to the participating institutions, and trends were identified.

With the consent of participating institutions and as part of Alberta Learning's accountability initiative, Council is using the DAD database to generate information for several key performance indicator information sets regarding student transfer as well as demand.

Transfer Patterns Study

In March 2001, Council released its Transfer Patterns Study, Fall 2000. The tables in the study are based on reports from post-secondary institutions as requested by Council. Starting in Fall 1979 and continuing each year, Council has collected data from institutional Contact Persons for its study of transfer patterns. These data provide information regarding the volume of student transfer between and among post-secondary institutions in Alberta and from out-of-province post-secondary institutions. In September 1979, 3,092 students transferred among Alberta post-secondary institutions. In September 2000, 8,745 students transferred among Alberta post-secondary institutions which was an increase of 182.8% since the study began in 1979.

Chair

After fifteen years as Chair of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer, at the March 2001 meeting of Council, Terry Moore advised members that he would be leaving ACAT in June 2001. Appointed in 1986, Dr. Moore succeeded the founding Chair, the late Dr. Harold Baker, who served as Chairman from 1974 through 1985.

At the same March 2001 meeting, Assistant Deputy Minister Gougeon announced that the previously full-time contract Chair position would now be redefined as a part-time voluntary Chair. He also added that it was hoped that additional administrative support would be provided for Council. The unit known provisionally as the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer/Private Colleges Accreditation Board Secretariat, would, in future, function as a branch within the Adult Learning division of the Ministry and operate under the leadership of Marilyn Patton.

BUSINESS PLAN GOALS AND RESULTS

Council's Business Plan, 2000 – 2003, identified objectives, strategies, actions and expected results for achieving its three goals: admission, transfer and communication. As well, performance indicators were

identified for each goal. The following reports progress in achieving the goals.

GOAL: *Admission* - Students will be admitted to programs on the basis of the relevance and quality of their total educational experiences.

Performance Indicator

Annually provide information on application activity to programs at post-secondary institutions, Fall admissions cycle.

Target: Identify trends regarding the number of learners receiving offers of admission and attending programs at post-secondary institutions for the Fall admissions cycle.

Results: The Council Office conducted the Duplicate Application Detection Fall 2000 project, produced data for institutional as well as system planning purposes and identified trends.

Year over year comparisons: In September 2000, the number of learners who applied to programs at post-secondary institutions increased by 12.4% from the previous year. The number of learners who received offers of admission increased by 15.3% while the number who applied and subsequently attended a program at one of the participating institutions increased by 17.3% from 1999.

Five-year comparisons: Compared to 1996, the number of learners who applied increased by 22.9%. The number of learners who received offers of admission increased by 25.2% while 23.5% more learners received offers and were attending Alberta post-secondary institutions in 2000 than in 1996.

GOAL: *Transfer* - Students will receive appropriate educational credit when they transfer from one Alberta program to another.

Performance Indicators

1. Annually provide evidence of number of opportunities for student transfer.

Results: There were 25,084 course institutional transfer agreements and 400 program transfer agreements for a combined total of 25,484 course and program transfer agreements published in Section 3 of the *2000-2001 Alberta Transfer Guide*.

2. Annually implement the Transfer Patterns Study to provide information on trends in student transfer.

Target: Identify trends in student mobility.

Results: The Transfer Patterns Study, Fall 2000 was implemented and trends were identified.

- The number of students who were admitted who had previously attended an Alberta post-secondary institution declined 5.8% from the previous year. Increased transfer to universities, private university colleges and private colleges was more than offset by decreases reported at public colleges and technical institutes. The decline can be explained in part by the fact that several institutions are in the midst of conversion to new student information systems which has impacted reporting.

- The number of students from Alberta post-secondary institutions who transferred to Alberta universities increased by 1.1% to a record 5,011 students.

- Student transfers into Alberta decreased by 25.8% over the previous year's total. Recent procedural changes at Athabasca University greatly impact these results. Excluding Athabasca's results from 1999 and 2000 totals, the number of students transferring into province in Fall 2000 decreased by 1.4% from the 1999 total.

- The number of students who transferred within Alberta and who also received advance credit in Fall 2000 decreased by 2.5% compared to the 1999 total. The decline can be explained, at least in part, by reporting difficulties caused by information system conversion at some institutions. In other cases, internal institutional procedures may impact reporting.

- The number of students who transferred from other Alberta post-secondary institutions and received advance credit at universities increased by 0.4% but decreased by 19.5% at public colleges.

3. Annually provide evidence of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) policies at Alberta post-secondary institutions.

Target: Increase the number of post-secondary institutions with policies that enable students to have access to flexible and effective means of assessment of their prior learning when they apply for admission to programs at post-secondary institutions.

Results: Fifteen post-secondary institutions reported prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) policies during the year. This is the same number of institutions that was reported last year.

GOAL: ***Communication*** **- Students will have access to current, accurate information on admission and transfer policies as well as course and program transfer opportunities.**

Performance Indicators

1. Annually report the percentage of publicly funded post-secondary institutions with transfer agreements in the *Alberta Transfer Guide*.

Target: 100% of publicly funded post-secondary institutions have transfer agreements recorded in the *Alberta Transfer Guide*.

Results: For the second year in a row, all twenty-six publicly funded post-secondary institutions had transfer agreements in the *2000-2001 Alberta Transfer Guide*.

2. Annually report the total number of institutions participating in the student transfer system by negotiating transfer agreements for publication in the *Alberta Transfer Guide*.

Target: Ensure that institutions that should have entries in Section 3 of *the Alberta Transfer Guide* are included in the publication.

Results: The *2000-2001 Alberta Transfer Guide* contained transfer agreements involving thirty-six post-secondary institutions. This is a net increase of one institution over the previous edition's total.

3. Annually provide evidence of procedures to assure accuracy of transfer information in the Transfer Guide and the Online Alberta Transfer Guide.

Target: Maintain or improve the accuracy of transfer information.

Results: The Council Office continued to implement strict quality control procedures to ensure accuracy of transfer information in the *Alberta Transfer Guide* and the Online Alberta Transfer Guide. The production schedule of the *Alberta Transfer Guide* was published as Addendum F in the *Handbook for Contact Persons*, is posted on the ACAT Contact Persons' Web site and was the focus of discussion at the annual meeting of the Committee of Contact Persons. The Council Office produced the September and December editions of the New Transfer Agreements Report for distribution to all Contact Persons. These reports contained all new transfer agreements formalized since publication of the *2000-2001 Alberta Transfer Guide*. In addition, six periodic Batch New Transfer Agreements Reports were produced and distributed to Contact Persons. Each report documents all new Transfer Agreements approved via the Web site since the previous Batch New Transfer Agreements Report. As a means of providing final verification before publication on the Web, the Council

Office uses the report to flag issues or concerns. Prior to the end of the February due date for *Transfer Guide* changes, a first draft of the 26th edition of the Guide was forwarded to Contact Persons. The annual April meeting of Contact Persons from universities and private university colleges to review the March draft for publication serves as a further quality control procedure.

ADDENDUM A

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

During the year there were a number of changes to the Council membership. Student members typically serve for one year, reflecting their association with their student organizations.

Naomi Agard	Student member (from June 2000)
Terry Cooper	Public colleges member
Anne Marie Decore	Universities member
Jim Dueck	Secondary system member from Alberta Learning (through January 2001)
Catherine Eddy	Private university colleges member
Elaine Foulon	Public colleges member
Jeff Hayes	Student member (through May 2000)
Shirley Holloway	Technical institutes member
Judith Hughes	Universities member
Bob Lockwood	Public colleges member (through November 2000)
Erin Ludwig	Student member (from June 2000)
Sue Lynch	Secondary system member from Alberta Learning (from February 2001)
Vance MacNichol	Public member
Peggy Patterson	Universities member
Harry Reding	Public member
Lyndon Simmons	Student member (through May 2000)
Jean Valgardson	Public colleges member (from February 2001)
Terry Moore	Chair
Marilyn Patton	Executive officer

ADDENDUM B

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following Terms of Reference were adopted by Council motion on 14 February 1975:

1. The Council shall review current regulations, proposals and practices for admissions and transfer which have been generated by Alberta Learning and by institutions and subsystems for the purpose of identifying those guidelines and procedures applicable to all institutions within the system of advanced education.

2. The Council shall develop procedures by which admissions and transfer policies, guidelines and procedures are granted system-wide approval.

3. The Council shall compile, maintain and disseminate a registry of all existing admissions and transfer arrangements within the Alberta system of advanced education.

4. The Council shall monitor the effectiveness of admissions and transfer policies and practices throughout the advanced education system; to this end it may carry out, or request institutions to carry out appropriate studies.

5. The Council shall recommend to Alberta Learning and to institutions revisions of policies, guidelines and procedures as it deems necessary.

6. Acting within the provisions of existing legislation, the Council shall, upon the written request of an institution, serve as mediator in resolving inter-institutional admission and transfer problems. (The Council will not deal with requests by individuals).

7. In the event that agreement cannot be reached through mediation, the Council shall, upon written request by the institutions concerned, serve as arbitrator.

8. In fulfilling its arbitration role, the Council shall establish arbitration procedures, inform the institutions of these procedures, and inform the institutions of its decisions, which shall be final and binding.

9. The Council shall advise the Minister of any legislative changes which it deems necessary.

10. The Council, at the request of the Minister or institutions, shall comment on unresolved transfer problems related to proposed programs.

11. The Council shall report annually to the Minister of Learning on its activities.

12. The Council will operate with the support of: a) Council members, to be reimbursed by Alberta Learning for out-of-pocket expenses incurred; b) the Chairman, to be paid an appropriate honorarium; and c) an executive secretary and such other necessary resources and services to be made available by Alberta Learning as required by the Council in the fulfillment of its responsibilities.

ADDENDUM C
COUNCIL PRINCIPLES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. CONTEXT

1. Role and Composition

The role of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer is to be a catalyst for change and an advocate for learners in the areas of post-secondary admission and transfer. To carry out its role Council provides leadership and direction in the improvement of educational opportunities for Alberta students through inter-institutional transfer. This requires a commitment to improving communication among Alberta post-secondary institutions, and thus to promote the advantages of a system of education, with all that this means for educational planning for the benefit of learners.

In the fulfillment of its role, Council is engaged in the following activities:

(a) **leadership** — including the development and formulation of policies and procedures whereby transfer credit for courses and programs may be negotiated.

(b) **communication** — Council is commited to improving communication on matters regarding admissions and transfer.

(c) **publication** — primarily the production and distribution of a yearly *Transfer Guide* listing all transfer credit arrangements for courses and programs within the Alberta post-secondary system, together with statements of relevant policies and procedures. The Council Office also produces periodic New Transfer Agreements reports, a *Handbook for Contact Persons*, the yearly Transfer Patterns tables, and an *Annual Report*.

(d) **mediation** — as requested by institutions within the system, to resolve complaints or disputes concerning transfer arrangements and credits, and thus to ensure that the best interests of students are served.

(e) **applied research** — on matters related to the transfer of students throughout the system.

The 14 member Council which is appointed by the Minister of Learning is an independent body which reports annually to the Minister. Council membership includes the Chair, 2 members of the public, 2 student members, 3 members nominated by the Universities Co-ordinating Council, 4 members nominated by the Council of College and Technical Institute Presidents, 1 member nominated by the Private Colleges Co-ordinating Council, and 1 secondary system member from Alberta Learning. Professional support, including service of an Executive Officer, is supplied by Alberta Learning.

The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer usually meets 4 times a year, generally at institutions.

2. Overview of the Post-secondary System

The Council's activities are directed primarily towards the Alberta post-secondary system, which includes 4 universities, The Banff Centre, 15 public colleges, 2 institutes of technology, and 5 private university colleges, and other private colleges. There are, in addition, a number of private non-affiliated institutions, some of which may offer courses which have transfer potential. Although the Council's mandate is directed towards the Alberta post-secondary system, the Council is sensitive to student transferability involving institutions outside of the province. For this reason the *Alberta Transfer Guide* is distributed across Canada as well as the United States.

3. Types of Transfer

Within the system of post-secondary institutions, transfer of credit for courses or programs may occur among institutions within a sector (for example, between public colleges) or among institutions of different types (for example, from a vocational college to a college). Transfer arrangements published in the *Alberta Transfer Guide* include courses and programs transferable to universities and private university colleges and those transferable to colleges and technical institutes.

4. Definition of Terms

In dealing with matters relating to transfer, there are several commonly used terms which may require clarification. Some of the more important are:

Accessibility: the degree of openness of institutions to students seeking admission to their program. (See Principle "d".)

Advance credit: the award of credit in given courses or programs on the basis of formal and informal learning experiences including: 1) work experience, 2) maturity/life experience, 3) unstructured educational experiences such as self-study, 4) structured educational activity. (See Transfer credit.)

Affiliation: a formal agreement of association or co-operation between two institutions whereby some courses and programs offered by the sending institution are substantially the same as those offered by the receiving institution. Transfer credit is thereby awarded.

Receiving institution: an institution to which students transfer course or program credits acquired at another institution. (See Sending institution.)

Reciprocal bilateral transfer agreement: a transfer agreement that has been negotiated between two institutions whereby Institution A agrees to accept the course (or cluster of courses) taken at Institution B in lieu of its own course (or cluster of courses) and reciprocally, Institution B agrees to accept the course (or cluster of courses) taken at Institution A in lieu of its own course (or cluster of courses). Therefore, reciprocal bilateral agreements are always two-way agreements. (See Unidirectional bilateral transfer agreements.)

Selection criteria: categories of qualification, capabilities, or experience (academic or other) which provide the basis

for screening and admission (or rejection) of students to programs.

Sending institution: an institution from which students may transfer course or program credits to programs at another institution. (See Receiving institution.)

Transfer: the mobility of students among post-secondary institutions on the basis of their having transfer credit. (See Transfer credit.)

Transfer courses: courses delivered by a sending institution as courses which correspond in description to courses of a particular institution.

Transfer credit: an advance credit awarded on the basis of successful completion of structured educational activities at a post-secondary institution. (See Advance credit.)

Transferable courses: courses developed by an institution to meet its own program objectives but which have transfer potential. Transfer may be negotiated either on the basis of equivalence or of relevance to programs or courses at another institution.

Unidirectional bilateral transfer agreement: a transfer agreement negotiated between a sending institution and a receiving institution which is primarily intended to be one-way. In practice, advance credit for courses involved in an agreement usually will be awarded at either institution, particularly when the agreement involves courses that are part of a university transfer program. However, in some cases credit will not be awarded in the opposite direction; for example, Institution A may agree to accept Institution B's cluster of transferable courses in lieu of one of its own courses and have the agreement entered in the *Transfer Guide*. However, it might not be appropriate for Institution B conversely to award transfer credits for the cluster of courses if a student with the one course from Institution A presented it for advanced credit assessment. (See Reciprocal bilateral transfer agreement.)

Virtual equivalence: See Principle "b".

B. PRINCIPLES

The Council endorses the following as basic to its purpose and activities:

(a) Student access to higher education and the opportunity for student mobility among institutions of higher education in Alberta shall be optimized.

Barriers to student mobility shall be minimized. The integrity of educational programs and certification must, however, be maintained. A student should not be required to repeat previous learning experiences in which competence has been demonstrated nor should more transfer credit be granted than previous learning experiences would warrant for successful completion of the program.

(b) Negotiation of opportunities for student mobility shall be based on the recognition that while learning experiences may differ in a variety of ways, their substance may be virtually equivalent in terms of content and rigour.

Insofar as possible, transfer arrangements should allow for maximum recognition of previous learning experiences. The concept of **virtual equivalence** is vital to such arrangements.

(c) Effective academic advising and career counselling and optimum mobility require that the student have prior knowledge of at least the minimum transfer credit which can be awarded.

The *Alberta Transfer Guide* indicates the minimum transfer credit which is available for prior post-secondary educational experience upon admission to a post-secondary institution. Additional transfer credit may be negotiable on an individual basis.

(d) Although responsibility for higher education is shared among various constituents, individual institutions have the primary responsibility for instructional programs. This responsibility includes program design and delivery, determination of academic prerequisites and student admission criteria, and certification of the academic achievement of students.

In respect of student access to institutions and programs, it is to be emphasized that factors in addition to academic prerequisites often are employed as admission criteria. That is, while possession of academic prerequisites makes an applicant eligible for admission, it does not **guarantee** admission to an institution or to a particular program.

(e) Institutions have the responsibility and the prerogative to investigate the total educational preparation of applicants seeking admission.

Such investigation is intended to determine admissibility and appropriate transfer credit, and to counsel applicants. The relevance and quality of the applicant's most recent educational experiences should be the basis for admissibility and for transfer decisions unless such consideration would unfairly disadvantage the applicant. Differences in earlier preparation should not adversely affect consideration of the applicant. (See Principle "b" re **virtual equivalence**.)

(f) After students are granted admission to an institution under a transfer arrangement, they shall be granted the same rights and privileges as students who began their studies at the institution.

C. A POLICY FOR ADMISSION AND TRANSFER OF CREDIT AMONG ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

1. Admission

Admission to a course or program will be granted to any applicant who has fulfilled the admission requirements for such course or program as established by the receiving institution. Where selection procedures are involved in admission to a program, each applicant shall be treated on the same basis as any other person seeking admission to that program.

In the case of students transferring from public colleges and technical institutes to degree-granting institutions, in lieu of the general admission requirement listed above, admission will be granted to any applicant who, upon successful completion of at least a full year's study at the sending institution, is recommended in writing by that institution as having satisfied the **appropriate** matriculation requirements or their equivalent. This is referred to as the Letter of Recommendation admissions category.

2. Transfer of credits

Subject to the above requirements there shall be two major transfer arrangements:

(a) Transferable courses and programs:

These are developed by a sending institution to meet its own program and objectives, and bear its own numbers and descriptions. Transfer may be negotiated either on the basis of equivalence, or of relevance. The principle of **equivalence** refers to courses and programs of the sending institution which are identical or similar to those of the receiving institution. The principle of **relevance** refers to courses of the sending institution which are in the same areas or disciplines and at the levels of programs offered by the receiving institution, and are therefore appropriate for credit at the receiving institution.

Credits awarded in this category may involve special inter-institutional arrangements or individual assessment.

(b) Transfer courses and programs:

These are delivered by a sending institution as courses and programs which correspond in description to those of the receiving institution.

Among universities, transfer has normally been assessed on an individual basis by the receiving institution. Formally approved reciprocal transfer agreements are listed in Section IV of the *Alberta Transfer Guide*.

D. PROCEDURES FOR TRANSFER OF CREDIT AMONG ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

To facilitate the negotiation of transfer arrangements among post-secondary institutions, the Council has established the following set of procedures.

Objective

These procedures are designed to provide a mechanism for the negotiation of transfer and transferable courses and programs, and for their inclusion in the *Alberta Transfer Guide*.

Categories

Courses and programs proposed for transfer credit are of two main types, each of which involves a different relationship between the sending and receiving institution.

1. **Transferable Courses/Courses with Transfer Potential**

   In negotiations of transfer credit for transferable courses, the sending institution shall supply the receiving institution with the following information: (a) course description, title, grading practices, weighting and outline, (b) textbooks and other resource materials, (c) qualifications required for an instructor. Additional information may be required at stated intervals for review purposes, or at the discretion of the receiving institutions.

2. **Transfer Courses/Courses in Transfer Programs**

   In negotiations of transfer credit for transfer courses, the sending institution shall supply the receiving institution with the following information: (a) course description, (b) textbooks and other resource materials, (c) qualifications required for an instructor.

Transfer credit is based on initial negotiations, when the course is first offered by the sending institution. Subsequent negotiations and concurrence of the receiving institution are required where, in the view of the receiving institution, course revisions by the sending institution are sufficiently substantial to affect the transfer credit which has been negotiated.

Procedures

1. Each institution shall identify a Contact Person (e.g., Registrar or Admissions Officer) who will be responsible for both internal and external distribution of formal transfer proposals and responses.
2. Each institution shall, through its Contact Person, maintain and provide on request from other institutions (a) a list of other important institutional contacts for the purpose of facilitating appropriate preliminary discussions, and (b) a description of the internal procedures followed in the institution for the development and/or evaluation of proposals for transfer arrangements.
3. It is expected that proposals for credit will be processed as expeditiously as possible and formalized by means of the Council's Transfer Credit Proposal Form. If the transfer proposal is acceptable, the receiving institution will inform the other institutions in the system accordingly. The transfer normally will be honoured within the sub-system of which the receiving institution is a constituent.
4. If the transfer proposal is not acceptable, the receiving institution shall supply in writing, to the sending institution, the reason for this decision.
5. In the event that agreement has not been reached pursuant to (3) and (4), an institution may submit to the Council a written request for mediation. Where, in its opinion, the Council determines that a dispute concerning transfer exists, the Council may mediate to resolve the dispute.
6. In the event that the agreement cannot be reached pursuant to (5), the institutions in dispute may agree to

submit the dispute to Council for arbitration. The Council will then establish procedures for the resolution of the dispute, and issue its decision resolving the dispute. The arbitration decision of the Council shall be final and without appeal or review.

7. Transfer arrangements are to be regarded as relatively enduring bilateral agreements — to be altered, amended or deleted only after **mutual consultation**. Regular discussion of existing transfer arrangements should take place between sending and receiving institutions. Any institution planning program or course changes which could bear on existing transfer arrangements as recorded in the *Alberta Transfer Guide* shall, insofar as possible, inform those institutions which would be primarily affected — subject, where necessary, to renegotiation. In cases where renegotiation of a transfer agreement is requested by either a sending or receiving institution, the onus is on the institution requesting the change to provide the other institution with **sufficient notice** and lead-time to permit renegotiation before the next edition of the *Transfer Guide*.
8. Renegotiation of transfer arrangements is subject to the same guidelines as for the initial negotiations (i.e., 3-6).
9. When a new agreement has been negotiated, it replaces the old agreement in the next edition of the *Transfer Guide*.

E. INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Within the context of policies and procedures of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer, each institution has particular requirements and practices for admission of students and the award of transfer credit. These institutional requirements are summarized in Section II of the annual *Alberta Transfer Guide*. Students who are planning to transfer are advised to refer to the appropriate institutional calendar and to consult with the Registrar's Office at the receiving institution.

F. PRIVATE PROVIDERS POLICY
A policy for facilitating course transfer agreements between Alberta non degree -granting private providers and post-secondary receiving institutions

Framework

The primary goal of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer is to provide leadership and direction in the improvement and enlargement of educational opportunities for Alberta's students through inter-institutional transfer.

To this end, Council has a continuing responsibility for facilitating improvement in communications and working relationships among institutions regarding the admission of transfer students and the award of transfer credit. Recognizing that adult learners are served by a variety of providers, not all of which receive operating grants from Alberta Learning, Council has developed the following policy and procedure to facilitate the commencement of negotiation between private providers of adult learning and post-secondary receiving institutions currently served by Council. The policy is intended to serve adult learners by improving transferability, where academically appropriate, between courses and programs of private providers of adult learning and post-secondary receiving institutions currently served by Council.

Students, post-secondary institutions, and the public will benefit from improved communication. By extending the coverage of Council's principles, policies and procedures, the needs of adult learners will be better served. The policy will help students by facilitating the transferability of courses among providers in Alberta's adult learning system.

Policy

Through its procedures, Council will facilitate communication among Alberta providers of adult learning, including those that do not receive operating grants from Alberta Learning, so that student access and the opportunity for student transfer among providers of adult learning in Alberta is optimized.

Procedure

The objective of the procedure is to facilitate student transfer from programs of private providers operating in Alberta. This procedure is non-mandatory and non-regulatory. The procedure enables the Council Office to provide information in a standard format in order to assist receiving institutions currently served by Council to decide whether or not to enter into transfer negotiations with a private provider.

1. A private provider may contact the Council Office if it wishes to negotiate transfer agreements with a post-secondary receiving institution presently entered in the *Alberta Transfer Guide* and have these agreements recorded in Council's registry of admission and transfer agreements.
2. The Council Office then will provide the chief executive officer of the private provider with a copy of Council's Principles, Policies, and Procedures and request the private provider to formally commit itself to abide by them in its practices as both a receiver and sender of students. At the same time, a questionnaire will be sent to the private provider.
3. When the private provider has formally committed itself to abide by Council's Principles, Policies, and Procedures, and has provided a response to the questionnaire, the Council Office will prepare a "Fact Sheet" on the private provider. A draft copy will be sent to the private provider for verification.
4. The Council Office may seek further information as it sees fit and may request a meeting with officers of the private provider.
5. When the "Fact Sheet" is finalized, the Council Office will make it available to potential receiving institutions

at the request of the receiving institution. The "Fact Sheet" is intended to assist the potential receiving institution in determining whether it is appropriate to proceed with negotiations for course or program transfer.

6. When a receiving institution informs the Council Office that it is prepared to consider course or program transfer credit proposals, the Council Office may ask the private provider to name an official to whom and from whom communication on admission and transfer matters will be directed.
7. The Council Office will then send the appropriate Council transfer credit proposal forms to the official at the private provider for use in formalizing transfer agreements.
8. If a receiving institution approves a transfer credit proposal from the private provider, it will follow Council's procedure and return the signed transfer credit proposal form to the official at the private provider with the original to the Council Office.
9. Under section 3 of its Terms of Reference, Council will include information on the transfer agreement in its registry of admissions and transfer arrangements.

G. PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS FOR THE RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Context

Adult learners may desire recognition of their prior learning for a variety of goals including employment, further education, occupational/professional certification, and personal satisfaction. To assist adult learners to further their education and in keeping with its Terms of Reference, Council encourages post-secondary institutions to develop prior learning assessments that are granted system-wide recognition. The award of transfer credit in given courses or programs may be based on formal or informal learning experiences including: (1) work experience, (2) maturity/life experience, (3) unstructured educational experiences such as self-study, and (4) structured educational activity. In Alberta, transfer agreements covering formal courses and programs are recorded in the *Alberta Transfer Guide*. By extending recognition of prior learning to include all four varieties of learning, service to adult learners will be improved. Recognized prior learning should be transferable among programs within and beyond the post-secondary institution when it is appropriate to do so.

Framework

As learning may occur in a variety of settings, it is essential that adult learners receive appropriate recognition for prior demonstrated learning toward desired certificate, diploma or degree programs. Basic to the purpose and activity of the recognition of prior learning is Council's **principle (a)**:

> Student access to higher education and the opportunity for student mobility among institutions of higher education in Alberta shall be optimized. Barriers to student mobility shall be minimized. The integrity of educational programs and certification must, however, be maintained. **A student should not be required to repeat previous learning experiences in which competence has been demonstrated nor should more transfer credit be granted than previous learning experiences would warrant for successful completion of the program.**

Council encourages institutions to develop procedures for the assessment of demonstrated prior learning. In keeping with its terms of reference, Council also encourages the development of procedures by which the recognized prior learning then receives system-wide recognition consistent with the educational mandates of post-secondary institutions. Recognized prior learning should be portable.

Academic principles

1. Recognition of prior learning should be based on demonstrated learning.
2. Recognition should be appropriate to the course or program in which it is accepted.
3. Recognition of prior learning should be consistent with the achievement levels required by the post-secondary program in which it is accepted.
4. Recognition of prior learning should be for learning that has a balance, appropriate to the subject, between theory and practical application.
5. Assessment of prior learning by post-secondary institutions should be made by content specialists, with external advice as necessary.

Administrative standards

1. Official notation of the recognition of prior learning on post-secondary institution transcripts and student records should be consistent with the institution's policies and procedures relating to maintenance of student records.
2. Institutional policies and procedures applied to assessment should be fully disclosed; e.g. in the calendar.
3. All personnel involved in the assessment of prior learning should receive training for the functions they perform, and there should be provision for their continued professional development in areas related to recognition of prior learning.
4. Institutional recognition of prior learning policies and practices should be regularly monitored, reviewed, evaluated, and revised as needed. In keeping with its terms of reference, Council shall monitor the effectiveness of recognition of prior learning policies and practices within the Alberta post-secondary system.

ADDENDUM D

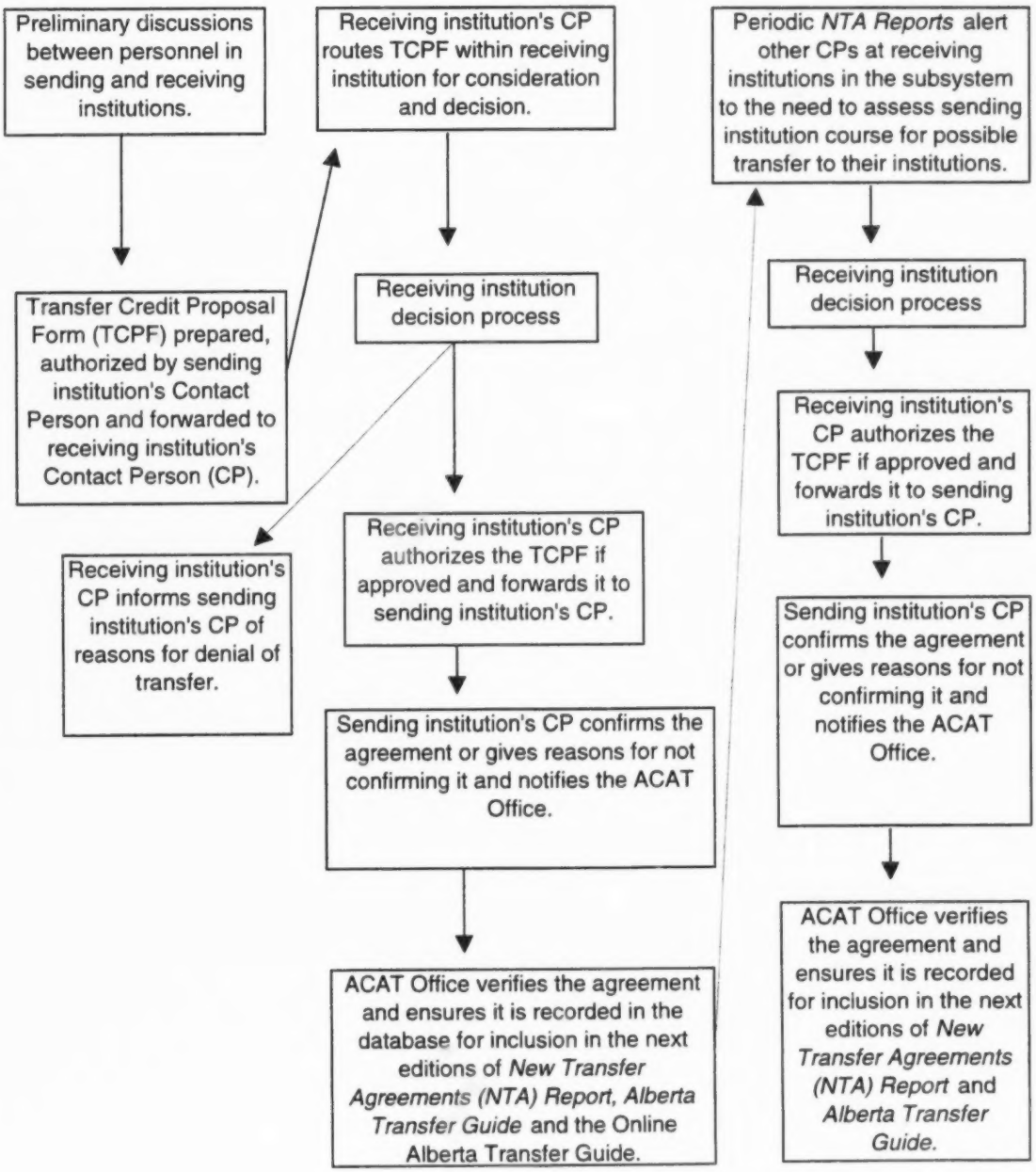
ALBERTA TRANSFER MODEL

Since its inception, Council has evolved the following approach for organizing transfer agreements among Alberta institutions. Council's Principles, Policies and Procedures provide the framework for the negotiation of transfer agreements between institutions. When preliminary discussions between personnel in the sending and receiving institutions indicate that a transfer agreement for a particular course or program is desirable and feasible, the Council's Transfer Credit Proposal Form is used by both institutions' Contact Persons to negotiate a formal transfer agreement. If the receiving institution approves the proposed agreement, it is recorded in the database for publication in the next edition of the *Alberta Transfer Guide.* The accompanying chart illustrates the sequence of steps in this process.

Transfer agreements are regarded as relatively stable bilateral agreements. However, programs and their constituent courses undergo change, with revisions from time to time to such aspects as admission requirements, program requirements, and content. Council recommends that regular discussion of existing transfer agreements take place between sending and receiving institutions. Changes may require renegotiation of transfer agreements and resulting changes will be reflected in the next edition of the *Alberta Transfer Guide.*

In accordance with its terms of reference, Council compiles, maintains and disseminates a registry of admission policies respecting transfer students and duly negotiated transfer agreements within the Alberta system of advanced education. Through direct consultation with both sending and receiving institutions, Council monitors the current accuracy of all transfer agreements which are published in each edition of the *Alberta Transfer Guide.* First published in 1976, the annual *Alberta Transfer Guide* has been established both within and outside Alberta as the official statement of transfer agreements, and is considered indispensable for transfer operations within the province. It is broadly used by jurisdictions elsewhere in support of Alberta students transferring there, and more generally as information about the kinds of transfer agreements developed in this province with the support of Council.

Alberta Transfer Model
Transfer Agreement Process


Preliminary discussions between personnel in sending and receiving institutions.
Transfer Credit Proposal Form (TCPF) prepared, authorized by sending institution's Contact Person and forwarded to receiving institution's Contact Person (CP).
Receiving institution's CP informs sending institution's CP of reasons for denial of transfer.
Receiving institution's CP routes TCPF within receiving institution for consideration and decision.
Receiving institution decision process
Receiving institution's CP authorizes the TCPF if approved and forwards it to sending institution's CP.
Sending institution's CP confirms the agreement or gives reasons for not confirming it and notifies the ACAT Office.
ACAT Office verifies the agreement and ensures it is recorded in the database for inclusion in the next editions of *New Transfer Agreements (NTA) Report, Alberta Transfer Guide* and the Online Alberta Transfer Guide.
Periodic *NTA Reports* alert other CPs at receiving institutions in the subsystem to the need to assess sending institution course for possible transfer to their institutions.
Receiving institution decision process
Receiving institution's CP authorizes the TCPF if approved and forwards it to sending institution's CP.
Sending institution's CP confirms the agreement or gives reasons for not confirming it and notifies the ACAT Office.
ACAT Office verifies the agreement and ensures it is recorded for inclusion in the next editions of *New Transfer Agreements (NTA) Report* and *Alberta Transfer Guide.*

ADDENDUM E

LIST OF COUNCIL PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED OR AVAILABLE IN 2000-2001

2000-2001 Alberta Transfer Guide

Twenty-Fifth Annual Report, 1999-2000

Business Plan, 2000 - 2003

ACAT Activities Chart, revised March 2000

Duplicate Application Detection Project, Fall 2000
Reports and Summary Tables
Trends, 1995-2000

New Transfer Agreements Report, September 2000 and December 2000

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition: Policies and Procedures at Selected Post-Secondary Institutions, March 2001

Recommended Practices for Officially Recording the Evaluation and Recognition of Prior Learning, March 1997

University Transfer: Advice for University Transfer Program Students, brochure revised April 2000

Transfer Patterns Study, Fall 2000
Fall 2000 Report
Part One: Mobility Tables
Part Two: Advance Credit Tables

Transfer Patterns Studies, 1979-2000, Extracts by Sector

Cohort Study of University Transfer Program Students at Seven Public Colleges, 1991-1992, published June 1994

Handbook for Contact Persons

Mediation Process to Resolve Transfer Issues, June 1995 (AECD and ACAT)

Program Articulation Committees, June 1995 (AECD and ACAT)

[With Alberta Learning] *Post-Secondary Transitions in Alberta: Educational Outcomes of the 1997/1998 Grade 12 Cohort*, February 2000

[Universities Co-ordinating Council] Working Group on Admissions and Transfer, Final Report, November 2000

[Universities Co-ordinating Council] Applied Mathematics 30 and Admission to University Programs: Summary of University Views, 1 May 2000

[Universities Co-ordinating Council] Common Grading System Committee, March 2001 Update